REMARKS

Upon entry of the above Amendment, claims 1-17 are pending. Claims 1, 6 and 8 are amended; no claims are canceled; and no claims are added. In view of the following Remarks, allowance of the pending claims is requested.

Rejection Under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a)

Claims 1-17 have been rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as allegedly being unpatentable over "Improved Retrieval of Foreign Names From Large Databases," IEEE, pages 480-487, 1988 by Oshika, *et al.* ("Oshika") in view of "Automatic Name Searching in Large Data Bases of International Names," by John C. Hermansen ("Hermansen"). Applicants traverse these rejections as these references, alone or in combination with one another, do not teach or suggest each and every feature of the claimed invention.

At best, Oshika teaches a language classification technique to identify a source language for a given query name. Oshika teaches using a Hidden Markov Model ("HMM") as a language discriminator. According to Oshika, an HMM is developed for each of various source languages in the data set to "model" that source language. Subsequent query names are fed into the HMM to generate a probability that the query name corresponds to the source language associated with that HMM. Once the source language is known, spelling variants for the query name based on rules specific to the source language are generated.

As a result, Oshika does not teach or suggest determining whether each of the records in the set is likely to match the query as set forth in claim 1. Nor does Oshika teach or suggest the comparing or determining aspects of the invention for those records likely to match the query as also set forth in claim 1. Hermansen fails to make up for the deficiencies of Oshika. For at least this reason, claim 1 is patentable over references relied upon by the Examiner.

Claims 2-13 depend from and add additional features to claim 1. For at least this reason claims 2-13 are patentable over the references relied upon by the Examiner.

- 6 -

Claim 14 recites analyzing the query name to determine whether it belongs to a *culture* that is included in a set of *identified cultures*. At best Oshika teaches analyzing the query name to determine whether it belongs to a *language*. Applicants submit that culture and language are different mechanisms for discriminating names. In addition, Oshika does not teach or suggest determining those records in the set of records that match at least one of the generated keys. Hermansen fails to make up for the deficiencies of Oshika. For at least these reasons, claim 14 is patentable over references relied upon by the Examiner.
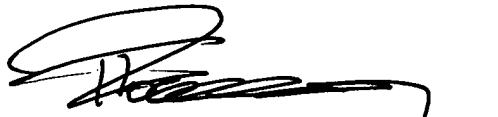
Claims 15-17 depend from and add additional features to claim 14. For at least this reason claims 15-17 are patentable over the references relied upon by the Examiner.

CONCLUSION

Applicants believe that the present application is in condition for allowance. If the Examiner believes, for any reason, that personal communication will expedite prosecution of this application, the Examiner is invited to telephone the undersigned at the number provided.

Dated: September 26, 2003   Respectfully submitted,

Rick A. Toering
Registration No.: 43,195
MINTZ, LEVIN, COHN, FERRIS, GLOVSKY AND POPEO P.C.
12010 Sunset Hills Road, Suite 900
Reston, Virginia 20190
703-464-4806

RES 101903v1